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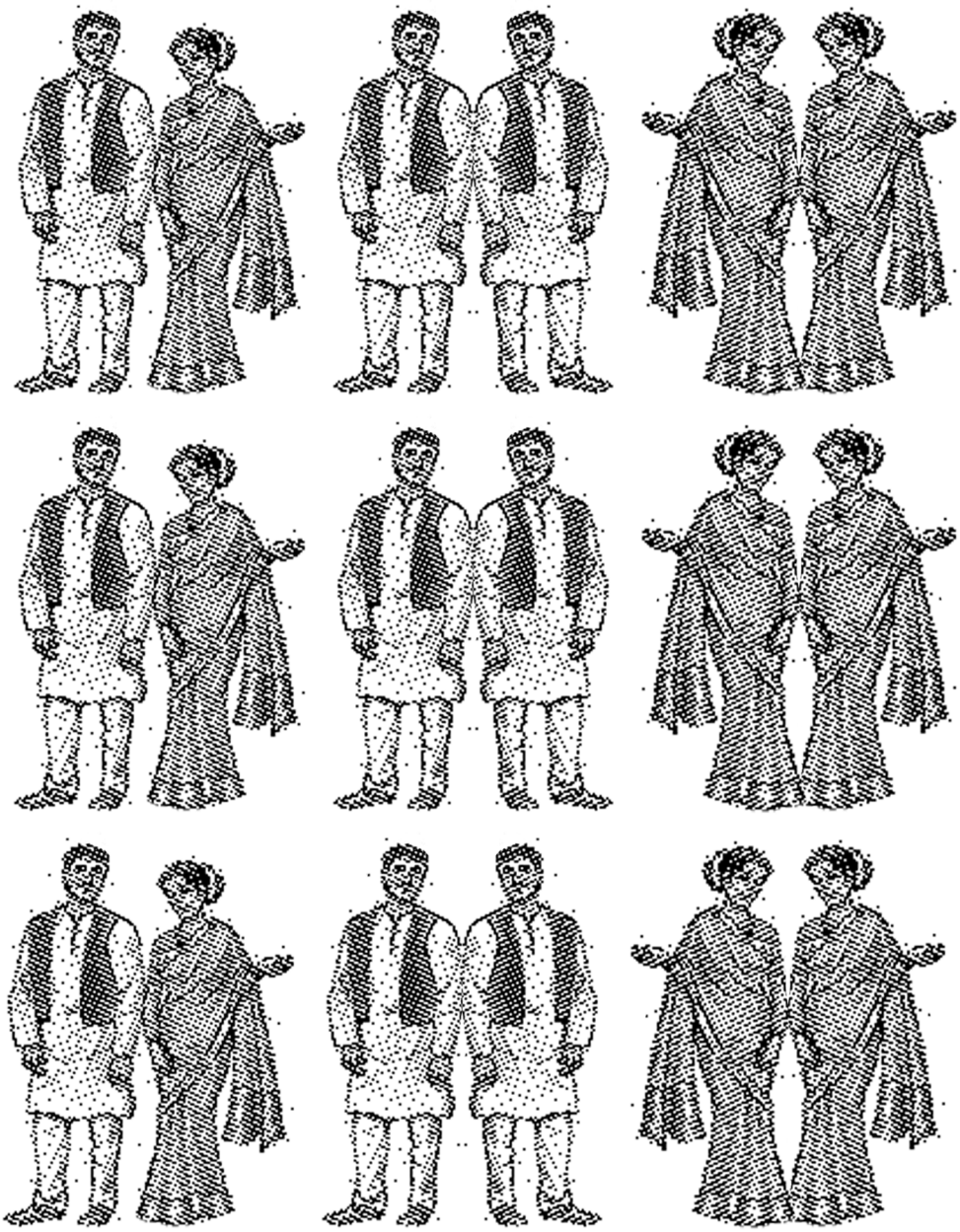
Marriage is essentially a
state-sanctioned union of two people

Do I believe everyone should have the right to form said union with whoever they want to?

Yes



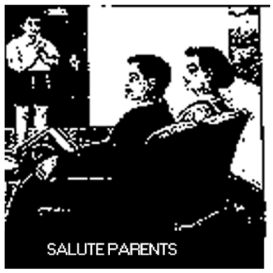
Do I think act of or the right to marriage for queers is a step towards or even a facet of queer liberation in India?

No

All through our lives, images of the **ideal binary** are peddled, reiterated and hardwired into us

PRAY TO GOD DAILY

HELP MOTHER IN THE KITCHEN



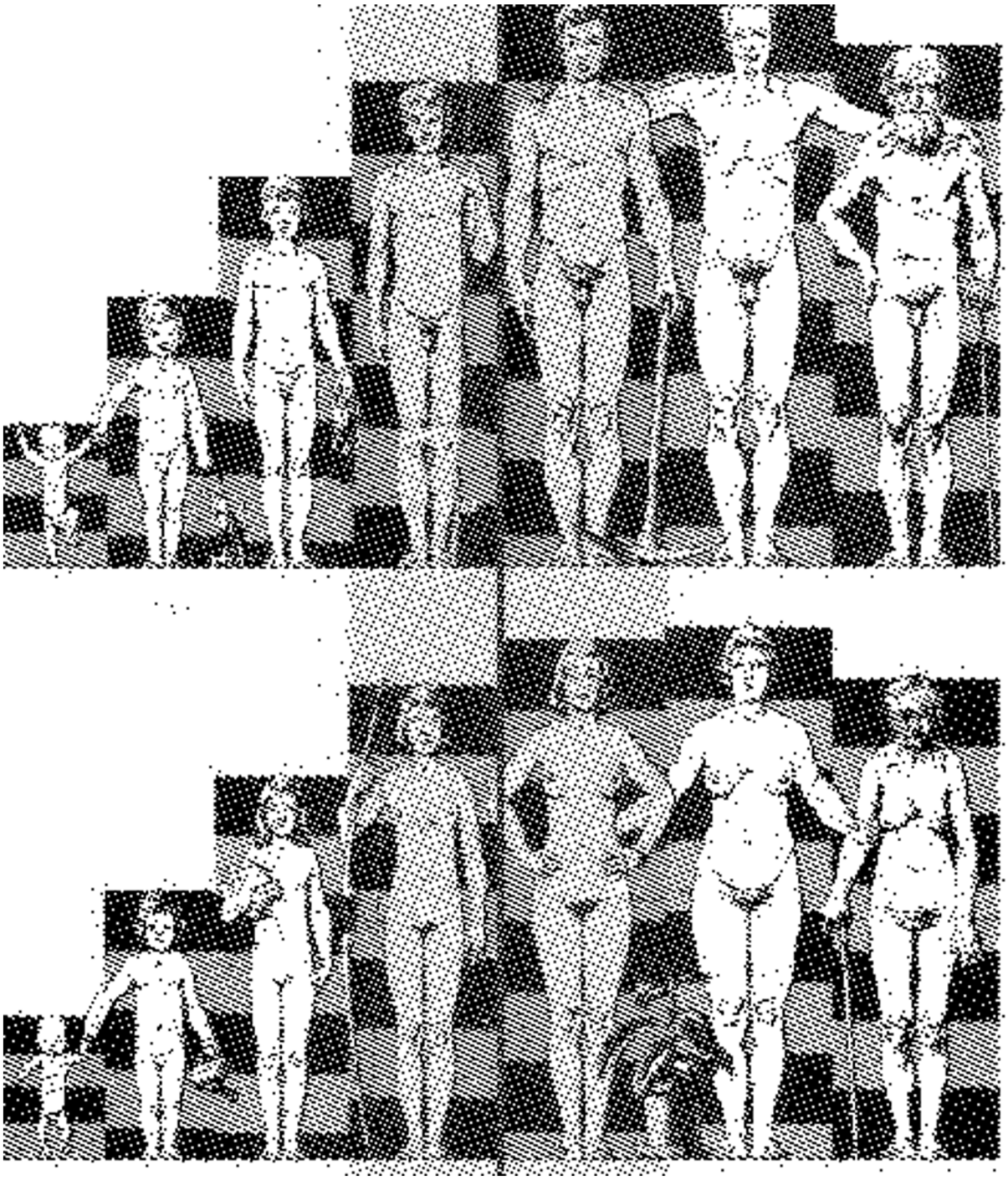
SALUTE PARENTS

DECORATE YOUR HOME

JOIN NCC

LEARN STICHING

And with age, we are expected to take on the gendered roles that have been conditioned into and reiterated to us



and as we take on these roles, the gender binary gets entrenched and legitimised

The most effective way for the gender binary to propogate itself in this country is by the societally imposed compulsion of *marriage*

It signifies the ultimate acceptance, performance and calcification of gendered roles in a relationship and in society

It's advertised as the 'cultured' way of life, it's how you get 'settled', it's the goal of a heterosexual relationship

Marriage IS essentially a state-sanctioned union of two people

But in a country where social, religious, and economic backgrounds are essential and *formative factors* for this union to take place

And when all of these *factors* are dictated by caste:

There can be no marriage without caste

In a country where most marriages are based on the requirement to marry within one's own 'community' or caste, which is really just an anxiety to carry forward the purity of bloodlines, prevent the 'mixing of blood' and keep collective wealth and resources confined to the same caste groups:

Wanted Groom

R.C.Goan girl 26/5'3" B.Sc, MBA, fair company's Manager, trustworth, expects suitable qualified intelligent, good personality value oriented

✔ **Suitable** match for Maha jan Girl, 5'-3", June 1983, Lecturer engineering college near Chandigarh. Upper caste no bar send particular,

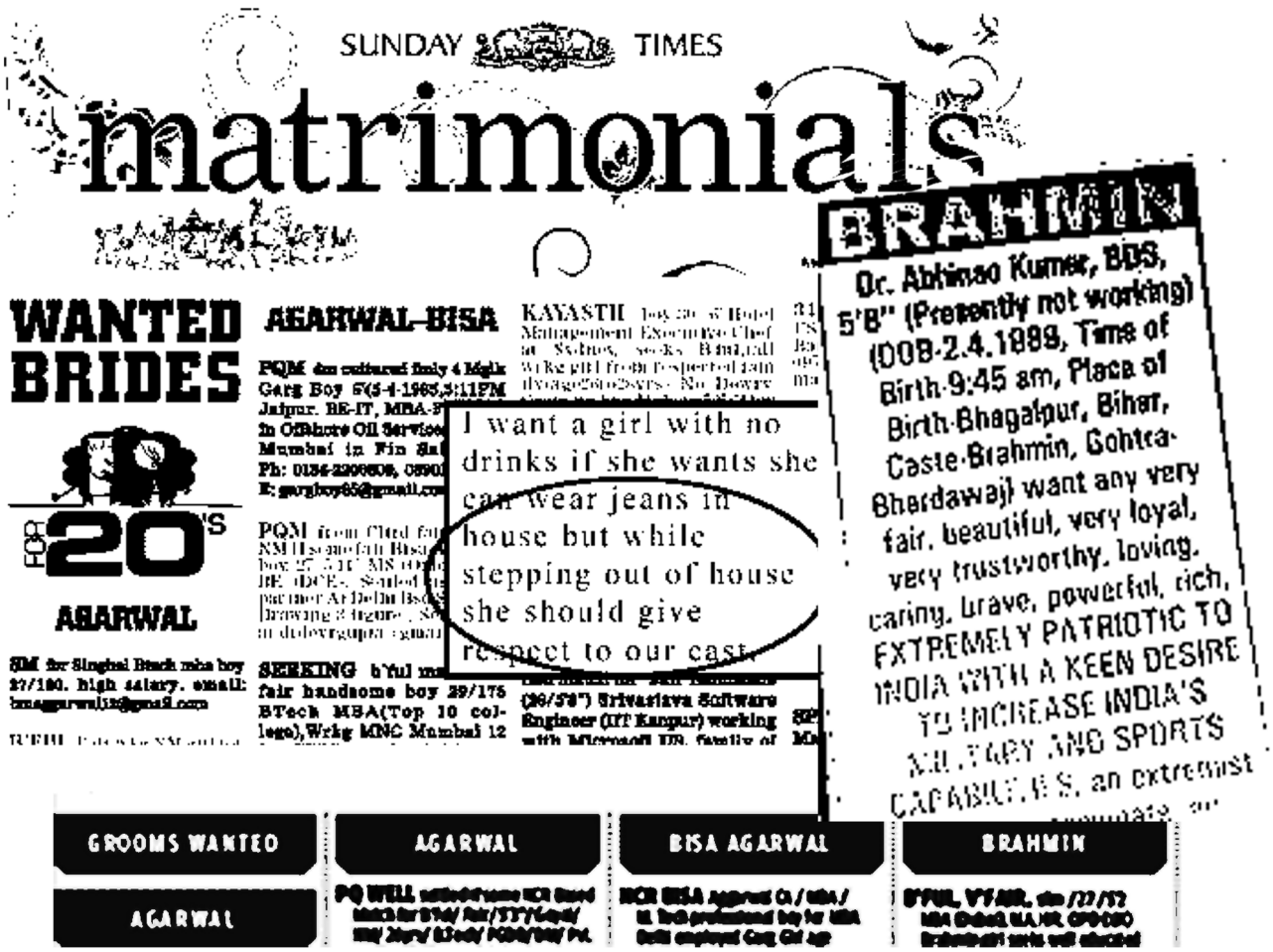
SUITABLE Match for very beautiful, fair, slim, Jat girl (Gotra Kadian Dangi Dalal) 23/ 5'-7". Pursuing M.A. English, B.Ed., Haryanvi Jat boy settled

Suitable Match for Hindu Sethi (Khatri) Girl (Non-Manglik) MA. Fair. Slim, Beautiful, 5'-3", September 13, 1987 (1:40 AM/ Chandigarh). High

Wanted Bride

✔ **Gaur** Brahmin Nm 26/ 5'8 Be/ 8- Lpa Working P (Jocl) Maharashtra Seeks I Working Girl Pref. fi 9033XXXXXX, 941XXXXXX

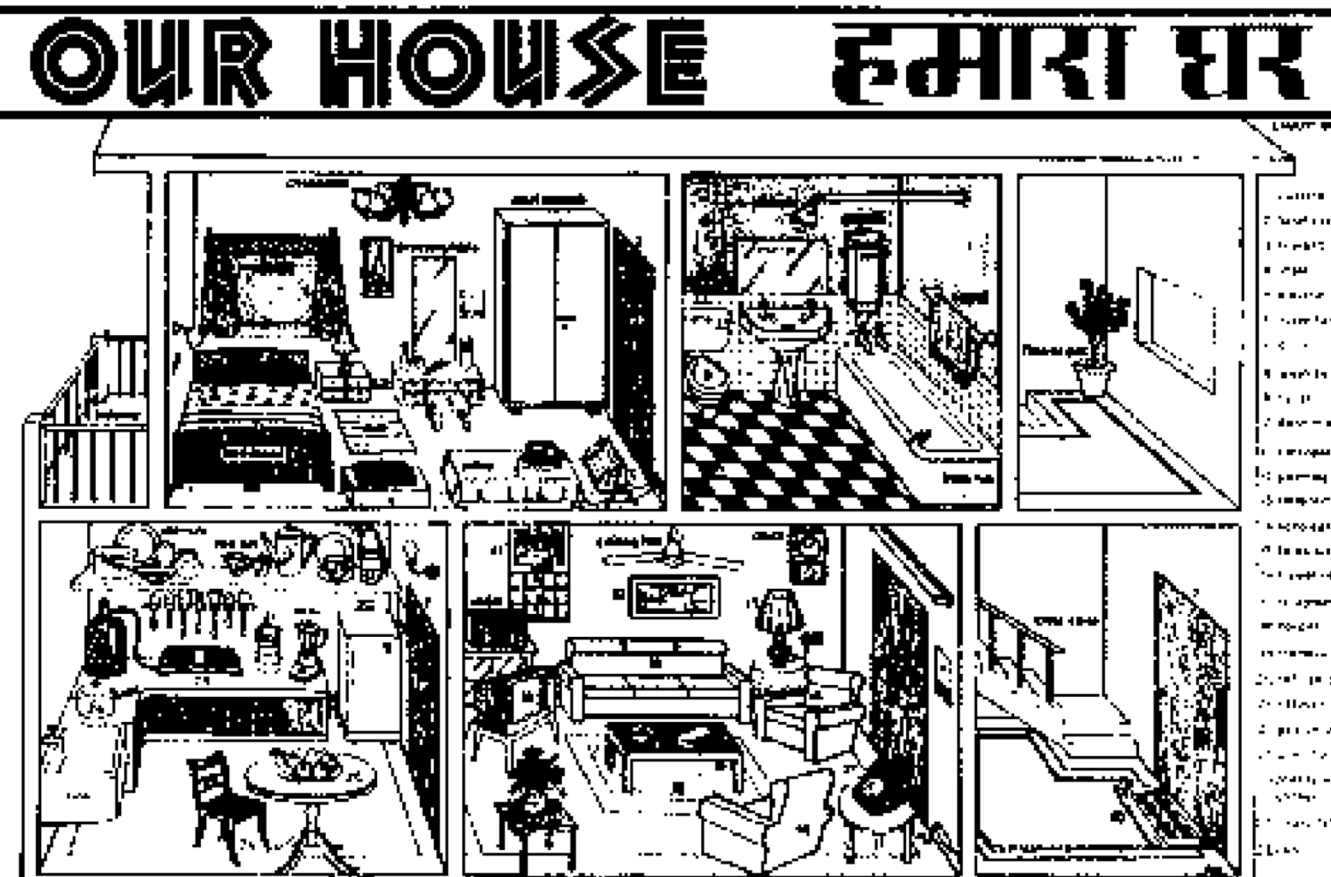
Vinod jalan, dob: 05.06.1980, time: 7.05 pm, 5'10" fair, bansal, senior software engineer, 9lakh baran : 90XXXXXXXX,



Marriage as an institution then becomes a tool for caste and the gender binary to propagate and reproduce itself through generational succession, the formation of family units, and the societal compulsion for people to carry the same 'values' forward.

Now, most marriages also bring with them an arbitrary and puritanical set of rules that are enforced onto individuals who exist within a family unit—once married, they cannot get too close to people outside their marriage and family, they have to tend to their new duties at home, and they basically have to live their lives within the confines of the domestic, familial and caste-enforced spaces. This brings about an automatic loss of bodily autonomy and a compulsion to perform one's own pre-conditioned gendered roles in a confined domestic space based on a fear of breaking the 'sanctity' of marriage and facing consequences from the brahmanical system.

Because marriage as an institution enforces generational succession and the sharing of wealth, relationships and resources on the basis of 'bloodlines' or caste, it actively constricts movement of individuals outside of caste lines-it restricts all meeting, touch, bonding, building community, sharing wealth and resources, and the formation of any relationships outside of an individual's immediate family unit and caste groups.



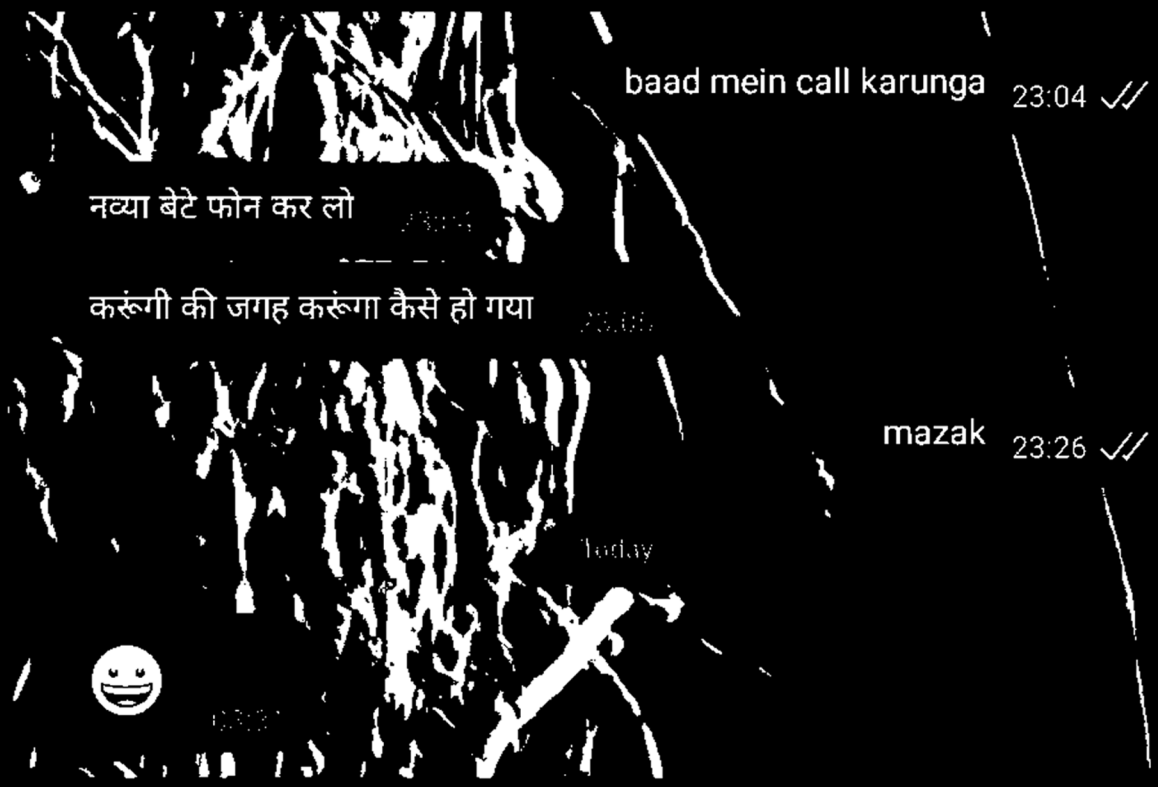
Queer resistance is the fight to preserve and enjoy bodily autonomy and agency—
the autonomy to break your body down and reconstruct it in your own image, the autonomy to love whoever you want to love, the autonomy to exist outside the violent binary, the autonomy to break down and reject conditioning, the agency to question and destroy the institutions that keep people in cycles of oppression.

Being queer in a brahmanical system like this means existing outside the gender binary and outside of caste because queerness is inherently an identity that's formed outside of structures like caste, race, class, and religion—
"QUEERS EXIST EVERYWHERE"

Queerness threatens caste, gender binary and brahmanical patriarchy by enabling meeting, bonding with, loving, sharing resources, and building community with people outside of lines of caste, class and the brahmanically imposed binary and its sanctioned gendered roles. This has the power to potentially threaten and break the system of caste-based patrilinear succession and the draconian notions of purity of blood that form the basis of the most violent institutions of oppression in this country.

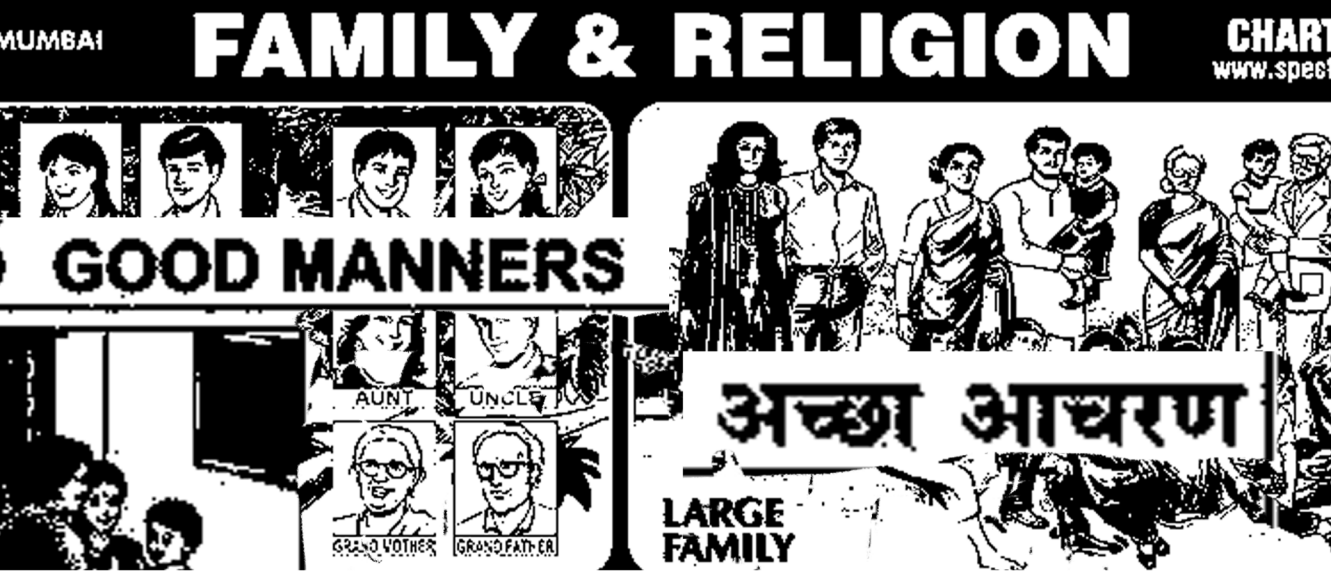
growing up transmasc in my hinduised OBC household meant that my parents have always violently enforced gender roles and marriage compulsion since I was a kid. I've known marriages to be all except a mark of love because all I've grown up seeing is hatred and abuse in marital relationships which are held together only by fear of the consequences of leaving and a general lack of resources and support outside of the marriage.

The freedom to take my body apart and reconstruct it in my own image was never mine because I was told that my body belonged to a man that I would eventually have to 'settle down' with and if i altered it or made it mine, I would be rendered useless as a person since no man would want to marry me and my purpose is to be a collection of genitals for somebody else. Even cutting my own hair and wearing pants or shorts and loose tshirts was seen as 'shameful' and lead to long fights where my mother would threaten to take me to turn me into (conversion) camps or to a bangali baba or to a doctor to 'fix' me long before even I knew I was trans. To her, me stepping out of line meant that I would face the consequences of not playing the roles of a 'woman'



Being transmasc and queer and still wanting to marry never went hand in hand because how could I want to alter my body when it wasn't ever mine and was to be 'shared' with somebody else under the hold of fear? How could I be trans and queer while being expected to prepare for the same 'goal' of marriage that's caused my mother to lose all her agency? How could I see the 'roles of a woman' completely engulf her, render her hollow, still be enforced by her, and yet want to be part of the same brahmanical institution of fear that's done this to her?

If marriage is structurally built on brahminism and patriarchy and its ideals and enforcement are so against what queerness essentially IS, then why marriage? What does marriage equality accomplish in a state where all marriage really consolidates is hoarding of wealth within family, the continuation of caste purity and enforced gender roles?



Outside of the enforced marriage compulsion, where does the desire for marriage come from for queers? What does it mean to want to marry in a country where marriages are largely enforced by fear to a people who face intolerance and suppression by the same system of fear and puritany?

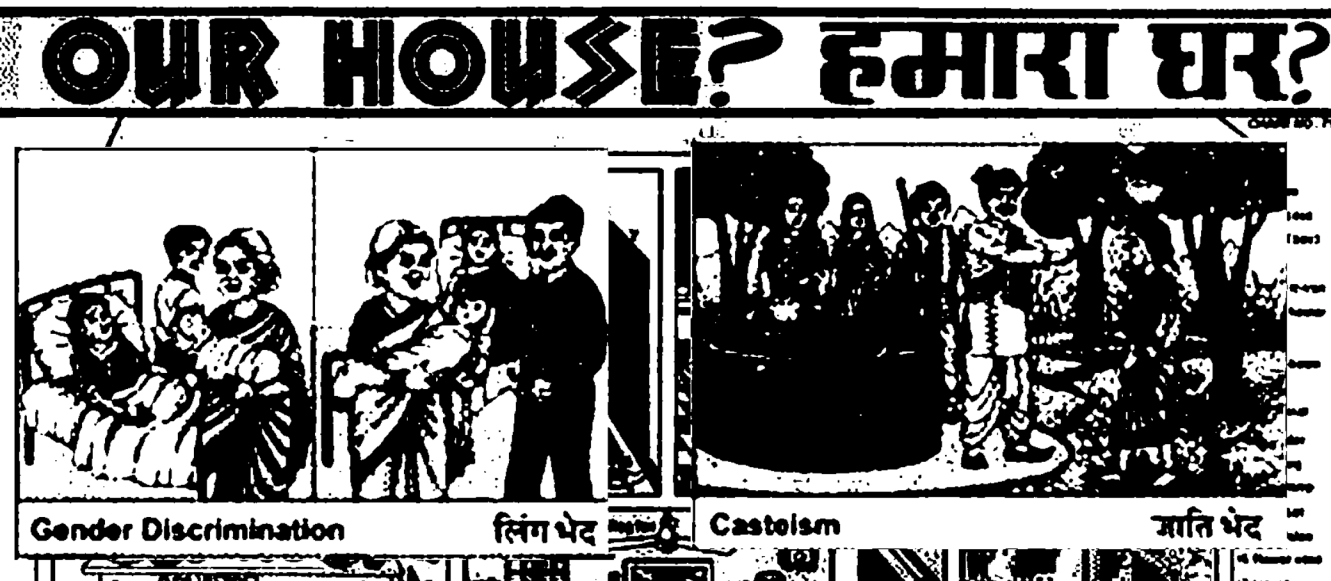
In an individualistic context, what are the values being matched when queer people are looking to legitimise their relationship? Essentially, it's two people who believe that their love will be made more meaningful if the state sanctions it. Where does *that* belief come from? In our context:

> It's reinforced by the belief in the notion of a heterosexual, binary family foundation being made "official" and the enabling of "officially" sharing resources between two people
>
> it's informed by one's own caste and class experience and how their queerness and ideas of individual freedom play into it
>
> it's the fact that we draw our ideas of love from how we see it portrayed around us especially when it's reinforced as the "right" thing to do or essential to a union

Queerness may be an identity that's seen as independent of caste, class and religion, but people and their experiences don't exist in isolation from their caste, class, and religious experiences. These are what form our politics and dictate how we interact with overarching institutions of oppression

All queers in this country exist as an anti-thesis and a potential threat to the system of brahmanical binary and puritany but when caste plays into it, Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi trans and queer voices are the ones who threaten it the most and have been historically and continually suppressed and violated.

This begs the question then— why is the struggle for marriage equality being painted as the most important facet in queer equality and liberation when the most marginalized trans and queer voices in this country are systematically deprived of basic rights like housing, jobs, horizontal reservation, representation in various sectors, and even the right to self-identify?
How is something like marriage equality helping when this systematic suppression stems out of the same system of fear and puritany? Why is marriage equality so important? Who is it important to?



"In order to perpetuate itself, every oppression must corrupt or distort those various sources of power within the culture of the oppressed that can provide energy for change"

–Audre Lorde

For queers, this has meant that the brahmanical system draws on the powers of intolerance, suppression, unacceptance and exile by the family structure and domestic space, distorting queer culture, and disarming the threat by bringing it in the fold of marriage:
When the familial space becomes one of the initial sources for people to draw their ideas of love and freedom from, it's no surprise that people naturally want to 'reclaim' marriage but since there is no marriage outside these oppressive structures,assimilating and being parts and propagators of the same system is the only real outcome for queers.

How is queer marriage then any challenge to the existing social order at all? How is it anything but assimilation into already existing violent structures if it can ideologically coexist with the brahmanical, binary patrilinear and heterosexual family foundation?

The fact that marriage equality debates take center in queer politics is already a sign of how the desire to assimilate into brahminism is taking over in upper caste queer communities. Because who can really afford to talk about and fight for their relationship to be sanctioned by the state when Bahujan trans queer people have been fighting for basic human rights, facilities, and representation for *so* long?
Where is the LGBTQIA+ "community" if its most marginalized voices have been historically and continually struggling and getting invisibilised for fighting for the most basic rights and if the right to marriage equality helps only the most privileged section of queers to assimilate into the same oppressive structure?

OUR SOCIAL EVILS समाज की कुरीतियाँ

I believe there are two facets of freedom:

> Freedom can either be indivisible, for all and by all
> or
> "Freedom" can be self-serving short-sighted
> advancement for the few

How is the majorly upper caste queer struggle and discourse for marriage equality anything but self-serving and only helping other like them if it does nothing for Dalit, Adivasi, and Bahujan trans and queer people who have been at the forefront of all queer struggles and have faced the worst consequences for it because of a lack of protection from caste networks and social capital that comes easy to upper caste queers?

How is this fight anything but the desire to assimilate into the same structure of caste purity and brahmanical patriarchy masquerading as a struggle for the "expression of your love"?

On a personal level, what does it mean when your love is being made more meaningful by the approval of the same structures that keep people locked within cycles of oppression?

Where is the critique of the brahmanical family foundation?
Is queerness and queer union just confined to absorbing into institutions that carry on the same generational succession and caste purity?
What's new?
Where is your voice, then?
Where is the struggle to imagine more in a system that functions on fear?
Is your relationship being sanctioned by the state the peak expression of your love?

More importantly, is the state accepting your right to marry whoever you want to a litmus test of how progressive your country is? Will it make the lack of freedom and human rights for Dalit, Adivasi and Bahujan trans and queer people easier to stomach and ignore?

My friend was talking about the paradox of tolerance, and he said:

In a system that's historically and continually intolerant of queerness and anti-caste voices and actively suppresses them, the only way to break it down completely and reform it starts with being intolerant of the systems that breed intolerance

In this country of brahmanical patriarchy, binary, and purity...

THERE IS NO QUEER LIBERATION WITHOUT
THE ANNIHILATION OF CASTE